

RETIREMENT OF MARTIN "MARTY" PAONE

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, secretary for the majority, Mr. Martin Paone, is leaving the U.S. Senate. I am personally saddened by Marty's decision because I have known and worked with Marty for nearly 30 years. I take great pride in the fact that, as Senate majority leader, I hired young Marty to work in the Senate Democratic Cloakroom in 1979. Three years later, I promoted him to the floor staff of the Senate Democratic Policy Committee.

In both positions, Marty performed his work for the Senate with incredible dedication and professionalism. In fact, in a floor statement I made on October 11, 1988, I acknowledged the "disciplined, orderly thinking" which Marty had brought to his work in the Senate, and complimented him on his "calm demeanor under pressure."

I was most pleased, but not surprised, when Senate Majority Leader Mitchell selected Marty Paone to be assistant secretary for the majority, and Senate Majority Leaders Daschle and REID chose him to be secretary for the majority. This last position, of course, is one of the most important positions in the Senate. The secretary for the majority is regarded as the Senate's "chief legislative officer" because the office digests and processes all legislative proposals which come before the Senate. Marty thoroughly mastered his difficult and demanding responsibilities. He has carefully studied the Senate's rules and precedents. He understands how this great institution really works.

The dedication and diligence which Marty brought to every position in which he has served the Senate have only been enhanced by his friendly, helpful demeanor. Marty Paone was always on the job and at the top of his game.

Mr. President, it will be hard to say goodbye, but I wish Marty and his lovely wife Ruby, also a Senate staffer, all the happiness in the world.

RECOGNIZING CAROL MITCHELL

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I rise to recognize one of my former longtime staff members, Carol Mitchell, who for 15 years helped me improve health care delivery and services throughout West Virginia and the Nation. Carol has continued her contributions to public health by working in the private sector for the past 12 years.

Carol has decided to retire to enjoy more time with her husband David and son Rob. I salute Carol for her 30 years of service to the Congress and for her loyal and conscientious staff work in my office.

Over the years, Carol has worked directly with educators, health care providers and community and business leaders in West Virginia and throughout the country to develop and implement programs which benefit our citi-

zens. She was instrumental in the creation of many of the Federal health and educational programs we know today and possesses a unique understanding of these programs and how institutions can successfully utilize them.

Carol's Capitol Hill service, includes 6 years on the Senate Appropriations Committee staff and 15 years as a senior staff aide to my West Virginia office. As a professional staff member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, she was a trusted adviser to subcommittee chairman TOM HARKIN. She regularly briefed subcommittee members on Federal programs totaling in the billions of dollars.

Prior to joining the Appropriations Committee as a professional staffer, Carol worked for Senator Robert P. Griffin of Michigan and Congressman William T. Cahill of New Jersey.

Carol was an exemplary public servant who has made a significant, positive difference in the lives of many people she may never meet. I thank Carol for her fine service to her country, and wish her well in whatever endeavors she undertakes in her retirement years.

THE MATTHEW SHEPARD ACT OF 2007

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would strengthen and add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

In the early morning of February 2, 2008, a gay couple, Thomas Colonna and Brad Crelia, were walking in the Capitol Hill area of Seattle, when they were nearly struck by a vehicle. The car then screeched to a halt, and several men exited, yelling anti-gay slurs. The couple attempted to run away, but Crelia, who had a broken foot, was unable to move quickly. The attackers descended upon the two men, still hurling epithets as they began to hit them. One assailant snatched the cane Crelia had been using to support his weight and began to beat him around the head and face with it. Crelia and Colonna both suffered cuts, bruises and broken bones as a result of the attack. Police have not yet made any arrests, but witnesses have provided descriptions and a license plate for the attackers.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. Federal laws intended to protect individuals from heinous and violent crimes motivated by hate are woefully inadequate. This legislation would better equip the Government to

fulfill its most important obligation by protecting new groups of people as well as better protecting citizens already covered under deficient laws. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CORPORAL DUNCAN C. CROOKSTON

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the memory of CPL Duncan Crookston, who died recently at Brook Army Medical Center in Texas from wounds he sustained when a roadside blast tore through his humvee on September 4, 2007. The attack killed three other soldiers in his vehicle. When he died on January 25, Duncan was 1 day shy of his 20th birthday.

Corporal Crookston's friends and family gathered at Fort Logan National Cemetery in Denver on Saturday to share their memories of a young man of extraordinary energy and talent who chose to devote himself to the service of his country. His fellow soldiers say he chose the Army knowing the dangers and accepting the possibility of losing his life. He did his job and "he met his calling," one soldier said.

Duncan joined the Army shortly after graduating from Denver West High School. With his standardized test scores, any university in the country would have been lucky to have him, but he was committed to doing right by his Nation and by those with whom he served. In the Army, it became immediately clear that he had a mind for engineering and electronics, so he became the radio-tech operator in his unit. He could fix almost anything, and in the toughest conditions.

For almost 5 months after the Baghdad blast, Corporal Crookston hung on. His wife Meaghan and his mother Lee stayed by his side at Brook Army Medical Center, helping him in his fight for recovery. His wounds, though, were simply too grave. He had burns over 50 percent of his body, lost both of his legs, his right arm, and his left hand.

There was no limit, it seems, to Corporal Crookston's courage. On a mission, he always wanted to be out front. In the hospital, he fought the odds to the end.

Corporal Crookston's courage is all the more admirable for the fact that he applied it in service to his country, fulfilling his duty with honor. "You will never do anything in this world without courage," the Greek philosopher Aristotle once wrote. "It is the greatest quality of the mind next to honor."

It is hard to imagine a more powerful example of courage than that which Duncan Crookston and his family demonstrated over the last few months of his life. There are no words that can capture the pain or grief they must have endured as they battled for his life.

To his wife Meaghan, to his father Christopher, to his mother Lee, and to